

## SWAMP FOX SCENE

A FREE monthly news magazine for  
the citizens and visitors of the Swamp Fox City



Volume 6, Issue 7

December 2016

### CHRISTMAS TIME IN MARION

Come out and enjoy yourself as the City of Marion does what it is best known for Celebrating Christmas!! With the awesome lights, luminaries, wreaths and more that line Main Street, the Saturday parade and a visit from Santa, our annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, along with numerous other special events, is lined up for the first weekend in December. Marion is a special place during the holidays. Bring your family and friends and don't forget the fireworks at Withlacoochee Park on Sunday night. For more details, see the schedule below.

*City of Marion*  
**27<sup>th</sup> Annual**  
Holiday Prelude &  
Community Tree Lighting Celebration

**Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
HMRA Prelude to Christmas 9am-1pm  
Marion Christmas Parade 4:30pm  
*Sponsored by the Marion Chamber of Commerce*

**Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>**  
Annual City Tree Lighting Celebration 6pm  
*Marion County Courthouse*  
Fireworks at Withlacoochee Park 7pm

**Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**  
Historic Marion Christmas Tour of Homes 2-6pm  
*Sponsored by Marion Chamber of Commerce & the Pilot Club of Marion*

**Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>:**  
Downtown Marion Merchants' Extended Shopping Hours  
6-8pm Downtown Marion

\*call the Chamber office for information/details 843-423-3561

Dear City of Marion,

As we head into another holiday season I would like to wish all the City of Marion a very enjoyable and safe holiday with family and friends! As we usher in a new year, we reflect on the past year and all of our accomplishments and our happy memories as well as devastations. But we made it through as a stronger Marion. We are reminded of what is truly important and what we cherish most in our lives. As we look forward we are reminded of how fortunate we truly are, giving back to our community and those less fortunate.

As Mayor of our great city, I have the opportunity to interact with, and hear from many members of our community, volunteer groups, businesses and organizations. I have been touched by the generosity of the City of Marion, and I would like to express my thanks to all of those who have shown great kindness and selflessness. You are truly making a difference in the lives of others.

We are so thankful for the citizens who made it through Hurricane Matthews damage conditions with no fatalities reported. Even though there were no fatalities we had devastating weather but overall the city is really blessed.

As we celebrate this holiday season, I hope we will continue to spend this time with family and friends and use this time to reflect and count our blessings. The greatest gift we could exchange this season is to serve one another. May I ask you all to remember your neighbors at this time of year? Especially, remember the elderly, the less fortunate and those who live alone.

On behalf of the City of Marion, I wish every single citizen a safe, healthy and happy Christmas. It is an honor to serve the City of Marion and I am again thankful this Christmas for the trust you place in me. From my family to you and your family, Merry Christmas!

Mayor Bobby L. Davis

**May the peace and joy that Christmas brings always  
be with you and your family!! Merry Christmas.  
Marion City Council**

PLEASE JOIN US  
FOR AN AFTERNOON OF FUN AT OUR

### HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2016  
UNTIL 8PM

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN MARION  
(Participating Establishments)  
SOUTH CAROLINA

GREAT HOLIDAY DISCOUNTS, CHRISTMAS TREATS  
AND MUCH MORE!  
IT'S YOUR LAST CHANCE TO ENTER THE  
WIN THE WINDOW CONTEST  
BY SHOPPING WITH YOUR LOCAL PARTICIPATING  
DOWNTOWN MARION MERCHANTS.



MAIN STREET COMMONS  
**HOLIDAY  
MARKET**  
December 3  
9A - 2P  
229 North Main Street  
Marion, South Carolina  
Homemade Decor, Wreaths, Gifts,  
Crafts, Fall Decor, Food, Candles and  
More  
843.423.9918

2016 Historic Marion Christmas

#### Tour of Homes

Saturday, December 10, 2016 from 2pm-6pm

#### 2016 Featured Homes

Dr. Alvin Abinsay & Mr. Randy Floyd	Ms. Ashley Soles
Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Fincannon	Marion County Museum
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Jones	The Depot
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Rogers	The Grove—the Inn on Harlee

Tickets \$20  
Available at Marion Chamber of Commerce & Marion Pilot Club Members  
Luncheon tickets will be available at the Museum for \$8.00 noon-2pm  
Present ticket at the Depot (Chamber office) to get your booklet and begin your tour.

Day of event tickets may only be purchased at the Depot.  
For more information call 843-423-3561.

The City of Marion has a lot of exciting things going on for the Christmas Holidays. Put some of these events of your calendars as things to see and do. You won't be disappointed.

**NEED HELP?**

Call City Hall, 843-423-5961, unless otherwise noted, and one of the following will be able to help you.

- Mayor Bobby L. Davis, (843) 423-5961, Ext. 21
- Alan Ammons, City Administrator & Building Official, Ext. 19
- Pam Jones, City Clerk, Ext. 10
- Patricia Brown, City Treasurer, Ext. 18
- Ainsley Sanders, Administrative Assistant, Ext. 11
- Elizabeth Ficik, Personnel / Purchasing Director, (843) 423-8614
- Vickie J. Nichols, Grant Writing & Publicist, Ext. 22
- Ann Jackson, Recreation Director, (843) 423-5410
- Dewayne Tennie, Police Chief, (843) 423-8616
- Cindy Barr, Captain (843) 423-8616
- Chris Smith, Captain (843) 423-8616
- Tony Flowers, Investigator (843) 423-8616
- Trey Cooper, Fire Chief, (843) 423-8602
- Chris McKenzie, Assistant Fire Chief (843) 423-8602
- Heather Evans, Municipal Court Clerk, (843) 423-8616
- Almeta Mullins, Secretary, (843) 423-8616

**Marion Chamber of Commerce announces Yard of the Month**



The citizens and clean-up crews have been awarded the Marion Chamber of Commerce Yard of the Month for November 2016. We appreciate all the hard work that has been done in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. With all your help we can make Marion beautiful again. The Chamber of Commerce appreciates and thanks you for all your hard work.

**REMEMBERING OUR VETERAN'S**

There are not words big enough. There is not a hug strong enough. There is not a smile wide enough. All we can offer is THANK YOU. You are our HEROES! You are in our thoughts and our prayers for all you have done.

“Honor to the soldier everywhere who bravely bears his country’s cause. Honor, also to the citizen who cares for his brothers in the field and serves, as he best can, the same cause.” **Abraham Lincoln**

The City of Marion celebrated the 4th Annual Veteran’s Appreciation Program on Friday, November 4th, 2016 at 3:30 P.M. at the Veteran’s Memorial Triangle (located on S. Main Street at West Liberty Street).

We saluted the veterans with the National Anthem, led by Ms. Mary Williams. Guest speakers included MGST. Gloria Evans (retired), Gen. Frank Jones (retired), SC House of Representative Wayne George, and Marion Healthcare Foundation Executive Director Ms. Mary Dunbar. Special guest speaker was Master Sergeant Rachel Gause, USMC.

The Rev. Larry Williams uplifted the crowd through song and praise. He also donated food packages to all veterans. Marion Healthcare Foundation Executive contributed back to school supplies for the veteran’s children.

Even though Veteran’s Day is over, please continue to say thank you to all of the veterans in our community. Let them know they are in our thoughts and prayers for all they have done for us in keeping us safe.

At this time of year we are Grateful for Family, Friendship and Love. Thank you for being a part of our Life. Merry Christmas!!

City of Marion Administrator and Staff

**CITY TO TAKE DONATIONS FOR HOLIDAY FOOD BOXES**

We are pleased to announce the City of Marion’s 7th Annual Christmas Food Box Project, and the need in Marion is more tremendous than ever. Hurricane Matthew caused much destruction and loss to our neighbors and we want to help provide a little Christmas spirit from one neighbor to another.

Our citizens and local businesses have always been very generous in helping our less fortunate neighbors and we are hoping for that same generosity this year. Last year we were able to provide over 150 boxes to local families.

The pre-packaged food boxes cost approximately \$40 and are filled with items for a delicious Christmas meal for a family.

Donations are requested by December 13<sup>th</sup> and any amount is welcome! If you would like to contribute to this effort, please make your check payable to the City of Marion (food boxes), P. O. Box 1190, Marion, SC 29571.

If you have any questions, please call City Administrator Alan Ammons at 843-423-5961.

On behalf of the food box recipients, we humbly thank you for your generosity.

Warmest wishes for a Merry Christmas and a joyous holiday season!!!

**A TEAM MARION SC NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**

Contributed by: Dolly Boyer

As we approach the Holidays, it is a good time to review winter and Holiday safety tips: 1) If you display a Christmas tree in a front window, do not put gifts where they are visible from the street. 2) Do not let mail, newspapers and flyers pile up. 3) Have an inside light on a timer. 4) Leave a radio or television on when away. 5) Do not hide a spare door key near the front entrance. Burglars know where to look. Give a key to a trusted neighbor. 6) Do not leave doors or windows unlocked to accommodate extension cords for holiday lighting. 7) Don’t post your family name on the mailbox or home. A burglar can call directory assistance to get your phone number and call while out front to confirm that you are away. 8) Do not leave travel plans or details on your answering machine. 9) Do not pile empty boxes on the street signaling to burglars what can be found inside your home. 10) Keep vehicles locked and do not leave valuables inside. 11) Be cautious when driving and be on the lookout for excited children riding new bikes, skateboards, etc.

This has been a difficult few months in the Swamp Fox City. Many in our county are still displaced or without permanent housing. Remember those hardest hit by the storm as you celebrate this season. Happy Holidays from A Team, the group that truly believes “We are our Neighbors’ Keepers!”

Cities and busy streets are preparing to celebrate the birth of the King. But take time to thank God for his love for us. May you have a peaceful Christmas!! **Marion Fire Department**

From all of us at Marion Recreation to all of you, we wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Look forward to seeing you all in 2017! **Marion Recreation Department**



Each month there is a Marion Foodie meeting and a Marion Film Club meeting, sponsored by the Arts Council of Marion County. Call Randy Floyd (843) 992-1627 or email [floydrandy@hotmail.com](mailto:floydrandy@hotmail.com) for information.

**Saturday, December 3rd...9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. HMRA Main Street Commons, 229 North Main Street. Holiday Market: Homemade Décor, Wreaths, Gifts, Crafters, Fall Décor, Food, Candles and More.**

**Saturday, December 3rd...10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Marion Chamber of Commerce: Prelude to Christmas**

**Saturday, December 3rd...4:30 p.m. Marion Christmas Parade**

**Sunday, December 4th.....5:30 p.m. The arrival of Santa Claus aboard the City of Marion Fire Truck. Pre-Christmas Tree Lighting Show: Courthouse 5:45 p.m.**

**Sunday, December 4th.....6:00 p.m. Tree Lighting Celebration. Fireworks at Withlacoochee Park Immediately following Ceremony.**

**Wednesday, December 7th...8:30 a.m. Rise and Shine at Hulon Jewelers, 325 N. Main Street**

**Saturday, December 10th.....2:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. 2016 Historic Marion Christmas Tour of Homes. Contact the Marion Chamber or the Pilot Club or Marion for details.**

**Tuesday, December 13th.....6:30 p.m. City Council Meeting, Council Chambers.**

**Thursday, December 15th..... Holiday Open House until 8:00 p.m. Historic Downtown Marion. Great Holiday Discounts, Christmas Treats and much more! It's your last change to enter the win the Window Contest by shopping with your local participating Downtown Marion Merchants. Please join us for an afternoon of FUN!!!**

**Monday, December 19th.....6:00 p.m. The City of Marion's Quarterly Town Hall Meeting will be held Monday at Marion Opera House.**

**Friday, Monday & Tuesday, December 23rd, 26th & 27th..... Christmas Holidays. City Hall will be closed for the Christmas Holidays and reopen on December 28th. Merry Christmas and be safe!!!**

### Marion Chamber Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



The Marion Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Marion County Youth Day Job Readiness Training Program on Wednesday, November 9th. This program will help/assist in working training and training in other vital areas to assist our youths in becoming work oriented/minded. The mission of the Job Readiness Training (JRT) program is to improve the overall functioning of at-risk high school students at home, in school, and in the community. The JRT program provides career exposure, and a community internship/work experience component for at risk high school students. Chamber President Kelli Noland and Mayor Bobby Davis welcomed this new program to our community and thanked program director Rev. Marvin Hemingway for his work in implementing this program. The program is located at 2614 East Highway 76, Suite C. Questions may be directed to Rev. Marvin Hemingway at (843) 430-8131, 843-765-3496 (office) or 843-433-8020. Those attending the ribbon cutting were treated to a meal and were able to meet and talk with the participants of the program.

Photo Courtesy Marion Chamber of Commerce

Merry Christmas to all our citizens. May peace be your gift at Christmas and your blessing all year through!  
**Ronnie Sanders and Winky Fore**

Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect. Merry Christmas!!!

## Good Morning... First Charter Insurance/Realty Company!

Submitted by **Kathy Stedman for HMRA**

What did one enterprising high school junior do when looking for a part-time job in Marion in 1956? She went to work for the Robert L. Jolly Insurance Agency, working after school and on weekends. She started as a secretary, and upon graduation from high school, she became a full time employee, thanks to a little nod from her sister, Gladys Wallace, who was the office manager at that time.



The "she" is Ruth Brady, owner of the family business known now as First Charter Insurance and Realty Co. Ruth immersed herself in learning every aspect of the insurance business and became a licensed insurance agent, then office manager for Mr. Jolly. The name change, in 1974, came from Mr. Jolly, who wanted his clients to identify more with the integrity of the insurance business than with his name. In 1982, Ruth purchased the business from Mr. Jolly and started carving her own niche in the insurance business. She also purchased the Horinbein Insurance Agency which sidelined real estate. Ruth's husband, Bill "Brady" (as more commonly known around town) obtained his BIC (broker-in-charge) license and managed the real estate transactions, allowing Ruth to concentrate on growing her insurance business into what it has

become in this millennium. Her son, Ashley, joined the business full-time upon graduation from Francis Marion University in 1989 and is now the vice-president. Ruth purchased the Bud Ellerbe Insurance Agency in 2000, expanding her insurance domain yet again.

Initial fellow employees of First Charter were long in service and dedication to the business, and were a very close knit professional family. Relatives of some of those employees are themselves now working at First Charter, "completing the circle" so to speak. Ruth is pleased to see multiple generations of the same families now coming to First Charter seeking their own insurance policies. Whether it be auto, homeowners, commercial, life, renters, or an "umbrella" policy, meeting the insurance coverage needs of our clients and giving them peace of mind is our ultimate priority. As independent insurance agents, we tailor a client's policy to his needs and budget, and as members of MLS, we have broadened our scope of real estate services. We treat all clients with due respect and truly appreciate their patronage.



Located at 204 N. Main Street, First Charter serves the public Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and after hours, as necessary. Simply call 843 423-1212 or come by at your convenience. The employees of First Charter Insurance/Realty Company will make you feel right at home.

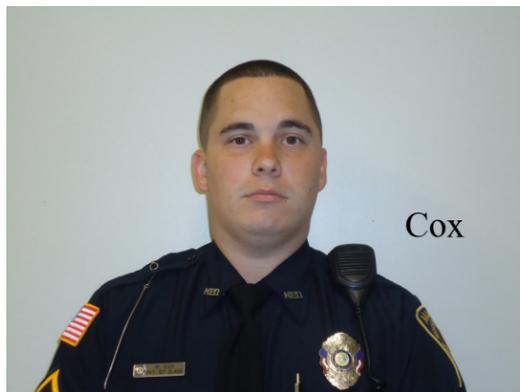
**.....GOING ON IN MARION .....**

Welcome!!!



The City of Marion hired three new employees for the Marion Police Department last month. Patrolman Justin Hardee is a certified Class 1 Officer with 6 months of law enforcement experience, PFC Matthew Cox is a certified Class 1 Officer with two years of law enforcement experience and PFC Bobby Jones is a Class 1 Officer with 14 years of law enforcement experience.

Join the City of Marion along with the Marion Police Department in welcoming our new police officers.



**Sanders is city's employee of the Month**

Ronnie Sanders was hired in October 1983 by the City of Marion Recreation Department. He was named the city's Employee of the Year in 1987, and promoted to his current position as Street Department Superintendent in 2005.

Ronnie is always willing to undertake any assigned job, from repairing street signs to cleaning storm drains, from operating a bulldozer to planting spring flowers, and from decorating the City for Christmas to supervising a group of employees on a project. Many of his duties involve long, hard hours and often result in him being called out at night, to take care of such tasks as cleaning up after a storm or for some other emergency that would require his immediate attention.

Mayor Bobby Davis and the members of City Council recognized Ronnie Sanders for his dedication to the City of Marion at the October 11th Council.

**City names Derric Ray employee of the month**

Sergeant Derric Ray has been employed with the City of Marion Police Department since December 2007. He consistently spends his time doing the right things and focusing enforcement action on the crimes and people that directly impact the safety of our community.



"Ray has a strong work ethic and excellent leadership skills," said Chief Dewayne Tennie, adding that the shift supervisor has a lot of experience and knowledge to share with other members of the Marion Police Department. "Ray is highly respected by his peers and appreciated by the community. He is committed to improving the safety of our residents and visitors of the City of Marion."

The Mayor and Council recognized Sgt. Ray for his dedication and contributions to the Marion Police Department at the November 8th Council Meeting.

**Marion County School District**

In an effort to grow our local pride, the Marion County School District will be sponsoring a "We Are Marion County!" spirit day on the last Friday of every month. On that day we are asking our entire staff to wear their "We Are Marion County" t-shirts. We would like to spread the spirit and ask for all the community businesses to join in on and show your pride.

Marion County t-shirts are available for order at Hi-Tec Signs, Inc. (843-464-9053). These t-shirts are a royal blue and sport the "We Are Marion County" call of unity. Williamson Printing (843-423-5672) also offers a long sleeved, button down shirt with the district logo on the front and "We Are Marion County" embroidered across the upper back between the shoulders.

For more information, contact Ms. Deborah D. Wimberly at (843) 423-1811, or email [dwimberly@marion.k12.sc.us](mailto:dwimberly@marion.k12.sc.us)

Thank you to the citizens of Marion for allowing us to serve you. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy new year.  
**Marion Police Department**

**Preparing for the Holidays**

The Christmas holidays are approaching. We as a community want to do everything possible to make sure we stay safe. Here are a few tips to keep in mind as you prepare for the holidays:

- 🍂 Make sure your home and car(s) are secure
- 🍂 Trim your hedge bushes
- 🍂 Make sure you have proper lighting
- 🍂 Be aware of suspicious activities
- 🍂 Be on the lookout for unfamiliar vehicle(s)
- 🍂 Observe your neighbor(s) property especially if you know they aren't home

If you see anything or anyone you think maybe suspect, don't hesitate to call 911 so an officer can be dispatched and respond in a timely manner.

Have a wonderful and Safe Holiday,  
Marion Police Department

The Swamp Fox Scene is the City of Marion's Free monthly newspaper for citizens and visitor's of the Swamp Fox City, Marion, South Carolina. Printed by Herald Multiforms in Dillon, city employees produce and distribute the newspaper.

The Marion Chamber and HMRA help pay printing costs.

A PDF version is available by e-mail or online. For more information about the newspaper, call Mayor Bobby L. Davis or City Administrator Alan Ammons at (843) 423-5961.

The City of Marion's Quarterly Town Hall Meeting will be held Monday, December 19, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Marion Opera House.

Everyone is encouraged to attend this question and answer session and various leaders will be on hand to address residents' concerns, issues and/or questions regarding the City of Marion.

Mayor Davis is asking that all committees, groups and organizations appoint a spokesperson to ask questions on their behalf.

Please join us as we move Marion forward!  
The Swamp Fox City Needs Your Support!

All Hearts Come Home For Christmas. As we celebrate the holiday season, remember the reason for the season.